



## State of Maine Board of Corrections

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Sheriff Mark Dion  
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### STAFF:

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### FOCUS GROUPS:

Budget  
Forensic  
Inventory of Needs  
Pharmacy  
Pre-Trial  
Technology  
Transportation  
Victim Services

February 18, 2009

Senator Stan Gerzofsky, Representative Anne M. Haskell and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

My name is Neale Duffett and I am the chairman of the Board of Corrections.

As most of you are aware, the Board of Corrections was established pursuant to PL 2007, Chapter 653. The purpose of the Board of Corrections is to plan and implement a corrections system that demonstrates sound fiscal management, achieves efficiencies and ensures the safety and security of correctional officers, inmates, volunteers and surrounding communities.

Our mission is to design and guide the development of a unified system that accomplishes the following goals:

- Reduces recidivism;
- Increases Pretrial diversion and alternative sentencing programs;
- Reduces the rate and use of incarceration;
- Achieves efficiencies; and
- Reduces the rate of growth in the cost of corrections.

I am here today to report on the current status of the Board of Corrections.

My presentation is intended to get the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety up to speed with the activities of the Board of Corrections as well as to fulfill our statutory report requirement pursuant to 34-A MRSA, section 1803, subsection 10.

To accomplish this, I would like to provide the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety with the following:

#### *1. An update from the Transportation Focus Group*

Transportation Focus Group Co-chairs Sheriff William Clark of Hancock County and Jim O'Farrell, Deputy Warden of the Maine State Prison will report on a

proposed coordinated transportation system. The so-called transportation “HUB” plan would designate correctional facilities in the Augusta, Portland and Bangor as major Hubs. This new transportation HUB system will provide more efficient long distance inmate transports. The Co-chairs will also report on the success of a pilot program, started on January 1, 2009 involving Piscataquis, Aroostook, Washington, Hancock and Waldo counties.

## ***2. An update from the Pretrial/Diversion Group***

Pretrial/ Diversion Subcommittee Co-chairs Scott Landry and Mark Westrum will report on potential savings resulting from the implementation of programs that develop consistent statewide treatment standards for pretrial, alternative sentence, revocation and reentry of inmates.

## ***3. Vision of a new System***

The Board of Corrections is guiding the development of a unified correctional system by determining the best use of state, county and regional jail facilities. The Needs Subcommittee is in the process of meeting with Franklin, Oxford, Piscataquis and Waldo county jails to facilitate ongoing discussion of the change of use for these facilities. The Board is considering changing these facilities from full service jail facilities to either 72 hour holding facilities, reentry centers or specialized use facilities beginning in the next biennium. It has become apparent that the Board of Corrections will need additional time to review the entirety of the system and develop some strategic investments so that the new correctional system can be successfully built.

## ***4. A report on some accomplishments of the Board of Corrections***

The Board of Corrections, through the Corrections Working Group and its subcommittees, has begun to identify efficiencies that can be attained by:

- Implementing a new transportation HUB system designed to perform efficient long distance inmate transports;
- Exploring cost saving measures in medical, pharmaceutical and mental health service contracts;
- Defining system wide information technology needs and highlighting cost savings to capitalize on;
- Identifying savings from the increased use of pretrial and alternative sentencing programs statewide; and
- Developing savings from mission changes of county and regional correctional facilities.

## ***5. A List of Bill Titles under consideration by the Board of Corrections***

The following is a list of bill titles currently being considered by the Board of Corrections:

- An Act to Achieve Efficiencies in the Transportation of Prisoners
- An Act to Amend the Home Release Monitoring Program
- An Act to Provide for the Early Release of Terminally Ill or Severely Medically Incapacitated Prisoners
- An Act to Expand the Maine Governmental Facilities Authority's Ability to Include County Correctional Facilities
- An Act to Amend the Laws Regarding the unified Corrections System boarding rates and fund balances
- Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter : Certificate of Need Process for the Review and Approval of Public or Private Capital Correctional Construction Projects (EMERGENCY)
- Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 182: Process and Standards for Closing or Downsizing a Correctional Facility or a County Jail, a Major Substantive Rule of Board of Corrections (EMERGENCY)

***6. A need for additional funding***

The county and regional jails will play a significant role in reshaping Maine's correctional system. As system changes are made, efficiency savings are intended to free up resources in the \$62.5 million property tax cap allowing some level of reallocation within the system. It appears that the \$62.5 million property tax cap will not be enough to operate the county's redesigned system in the next biennium. Also, the same costs that are driving the Department of Corrections budget are driving the county budgets. These cost drivers are primarily salaries, benefits, utilities, food, fuel and contractual services.

Another cost driver that must be considered is the bed space needs of the redesigned system. Adequate funding for the county and regional jails must be provided to support the influx of new state inmates caused by changes in the state correctional system.

In conclusion, additional funding will be needed to assist the county and regional jails with needs in excess of their capped amounts, even after taking into consideration the cost saving measures I have enumerated above. (Note: please refer to item #4)

A tremendous amount of collaborative work between Maine's counties and the Department of Corrections has taken place since the enactment of PL 2007, Chapter 653. As the work evolves, the need for additional funding is quite apparent.

I appreciate your continued cooperation in assisting the Board of Correction in this process and look forward to reporting back to the committee with an improved unified correctional plan and the required strategic investments to make this system work.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neale A. Duffett', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Neale A. Duffett  
Chairman of the Board of Corrections

NAD/keb